

Reflections

Monday, June 1, 2020

Sprint

We are sprinting to the finish line. It's June 30.

By then, we'll have transformed our organization from a residential retreat center into an online educational organization.

Many generations from now participants will stand up and sing songs about your ability to take on a new worldview and adapt to the new circumstances.

Let me tell you what this next 29 days are going to look like. They will be chaotic, messy, and full of uncertainty. Assumptions will get blown away and replaced by knowledge that is then modified ten minutes or one day later.

And, guess what? It's all good.

What we know today, will seem like quaint ancient history on June 30. We know very little about who will sign up, how they come to know us, how the technology will work, how adaptable our trainers and participants will be, and what will entice our participants to love their online experience. We'll try this. Then that. Then that, again, with a twist.

But we will figure it out.

I know each of you. You are smart, you're adaptable, and you care deeply about the future of Monroe. We'll make it work. Together.

In the meantime, my "scrappy bunch of dedicated entrepreneurs," you will be asked to make a dizzying number of decisions in a time-frame that doesn't allow much time for contemplation. That's OK. That's expected.

When you're in this kind of situation, you can only make decisions based on what you know TODAY. Please forget about making decisions that will be right for all time. I know that what we look like as an organization, full of knowledge and procedures, will look considerably different three months from now.

So, make decisions that work for our new online participants based on what you know today...and be willing to adapt those decisions as we know more tomorrow.

That flexibility, hard as it may seem, will be the key to our success.

"Fail fast. Fail often." That's how you know you're moving Monroe forward.

This is not a safe path. But it is a rewarding one...for both you and Monroe will grow.

Scott

I wish I could write this well. From Seth Godin.

I can't imagine

There's just no way to be sure what it feels like. Other people, people in our lives or out of it, people who look like us or don't. Your mileage will vary, your experience will be different. Some started with a huge head start, some with a disadvantage they couldn't possibly deserve.

Of course, the "I" is really we. No matter who we are, we can't truly know what it feels like for someone else.

It may be that we can't imagine what it's like to be the victim of systemic distrust and profiling. Or what it's like to worry about putting food on this table for that family. Or what it's like to be fighting a chronic illness or being unjustly accused of a crime.

We can try. We assume it's just like what happened to us, but slightly different. We can realize that tragedy is unevenly distributed and in constant rotation, but it's never going to be the same.

But just because we can't imagine—it doesn't mean we can't care. We can refuse to magnify our differences and focus on maximizing possibility, justice and connection instead. To take action and to dig in.

The leverage we have to see, to speak up and to create long-term change is a difficult weight to carry. Because if we can do something to make things more just, that means that we must.

I wish I was better at it. I wish it were easier.

We'll make things better by seeing, by speaking, by doing the work. Even if it's uncomfortable, especially when it is.

See you Tuesday.
Scott